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More land needed for cemeteries as population expands

Even with a gradual shift to cremations, South Australia's population growth will be putting pressure on cemetery space according to a report released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The South Australian government expects the metropolitan population to increase by over half a million people in the next 30 years. This will put pressure on land availability and may affect the future requirements for cemetery development.

Over the last 20 years there has been a gradual increase in the number of cremations which has resulted in the proportion of burials in South Australia slowly decreasing.

In Adelaide, the two major providers of burial and cremation services are the Adelaide Cemeteries Authority and Centennial Park Cemetery Authority.

Together they conduct about 56% of burials and cremations in South Australia and about 75% of these services in Adelaide. Burials represent 22% of services they provide compared with 34% burials for all South Australian providers.

The SA Births Deaths and Marriages Registry Office estimates that there were about 4,300 burials in South Australia in 2009. By 2056 it is projected that about 5,000-7,000 burials will be performed annually resulting in a requirement each year of at least 2 hectares of land.

The requirement for new cemetery land may be reduced by current availability in the north of Adelaide and regional South Australia and by the reuse of burial plots, changing community requirements and the emergence of new technologies.

The full article and South Australian specific updates on State Accounts, Retail Trade, Average Weekly Earnings and Housing Finance Commitments can be found in the March edition of SA Stats (cat. no. 1345.4) on the ABS web site.

Media Note:

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